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TAB "A"

ARMY Declass/Release Instructions On File

2301

A G of S, G-2 CONTRIBUTION TO NIE-50
"THE CURRENT SITUATION AND PROBABLE
DEVELOPMENTS IN EASTERN GERMANY
THROUGH 1952"

IV. THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION AND PROBABLE MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

A. The East German Ground Forces

1. The East German Ground Forces are known as the East German Alert Police Force. It is actually a cadre army with a present strength of 52,000, organized into 24 Alert Units, 15 officer and specialist schools, and several small miscellaneous units. The basic formation is the Alert Unit. With a T/O strength of 1,800, it contains three major elements of infantry, one of artillery, and seven smaller organic elements, including armor. Each Alert Unit resembles an understrength regimental combat team, and if all units were re-grouped by threes, an army of 8 divisions could be formed with a slight expansion in strength. Each unit contains branches of service found in a Soviet rifle division. The abnormally high proportion of officers (371) and non-commissioned officer (960) in relation to privates (468) suggests that each Alert Unit may be intended as a cadre for a division.

The state of training of the Alert Police is not uniform. Most enlisted men have had at least two years of service and are well-trained. The quality of its officers, however, is variable. Political reliability rather than military ability has, so far, been the criterion for promotion. Now former Wehrmacht general officers now remain in the Alert Police; having performed initial training functions, most were discharged "For reasons of health," or openly for political unreliability. Most younger officers have had little or not wartime experience. In schools, as well as in units, so much time is devoted to political indoctrination that it interferes considerably with purely military training.

Training has also been hindered by considerations of security. Since the fiction that this East Germany Army is a "police force" is still maintained, heavy weapons and equipment have rarely been taken from barrack areas, except at summer camps. Summer camps have not been large enough to accommodate entire Alert Units; therefore, exercises involving all arms have been rare.

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In summary, training of enlisted men is good; that of officers varies; and unit training is inadequate.

The major weaknesses of the Alert Police Force are poor morale, inadequate equipment, and lack of field training at battalion level and higher.

Nearly all defectors from the Alert Police agree that morale is extremely low. Reports from other usually reliable sources within the Headquarters of the Alert Police, reach the same conclusion.

Factors responsible for poor morale include: constant emphasis on political indoctrination; resentment of military service by many men who thought they were joining a police force; dislike of subservience to the Soviets; fear that hostilities would involve civil war; repugnance for constant political surveillance; uncertainty as to duration of service; a stringent leave and pass policy; crowded barracks; monotonous food; and the prohibition of private radios.

In combat, the reliability of the Alert Police probably would be dubious. If permitted to operate independently, it is believed that the Force might lose a considerable part of its strength; if integrated with Soviet troops, it would be less liable to do so.

The equipment of the Alert Police is of mixed Soviet and German origin. Quantity and quality of small arms are both sufficient for combat, but heavy weapons are mainly suitable for training purposes only. Units are far from full Table of Organization and Equipment strength.

In summary, the East German Alert Police Force, at present, has very limited capabilities. Until battle-worthy equipment is issued in full amount, its combat efficiency will remain very low. However, after issue of all equipment, and once the Force is reorganized on a divisional basis, it could be ready for combat in approximately six months. Staff functioning would encounter difficulties, which could be largely overcome by integration of East German divisions into Soviet corps. Some steps have been taken to make this possible: the tactical doctrine used in training the Alert Units is Soviet; and since September 1950, officers of the Alert Police have been undergoing training as Russian-German interpreters.

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2. Why has the Kremlin been slow in expanding the Alert Police Force?

There is evidence that in 1949, when the East German Police Force consisted of 35 Alert Units, and more than a year before the reorganization into 24 Alert Units took place, it was contemplated to expand it into 24 divisions, ready for combat by the summer of 1951. A Soviet officer defector then stated that the mission of these 24 divisions was the "liberation" of fellow-Germans in the West, during 1951 or 1952.

Later evidence indicates that by mid-1951, only 8 divisions were planned. Evidence now suggests that even this modest goal has been postponed, presumably because of lack of sufficient number of qualified officers for division staffs. Well-placed East German officers believe that the formation of these staffs will have to be deferred until the return of a group now training in the U.S.S.R., which is not expected until the summer of 1952.

A major political event, the Korean war, has occupied Soviet attention since the formation of the Alert Police in 1948. The 24-division plan was formulated long before the Korean conflict. Such a plan would impose a heavy demand on East German manpower. It would also affect seriously an economy which not only delivers reparations to the U.S.S.R., but also is engaged in limited war production for the Soviets. It seems possible that the 24-division plan was intended to create a force for the same purpose as that of the North Korean army. If by sacrificing East German economy an army could have been developed which could capture for the Soviets the large and valuable industries of West Germany, the Soviets would have gained immensely.

The United Nation's reaction, under United States leadership, to the attack on South Korea, and the subsequent warning by the Western Allies that any attack on West Germany, with or without direct Soviet participation, would be considered an act of war, changed the situation. The original mission of the Alert Police seems to have been abandoned, and, since 24 divisions were not needed for any other mission at that time; the program apparently was cut back to a more modest 8 divisions.

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In retrospect, it appears that the formation of 24 divisions would not have been easy. Training proceeded at a slower pace than anticipated, morale has been poor, and most of the ^{SENIOR} officers with experience from the Wehrmacht were discharged because of doubtful political reliability.

One or more possible causes may have induced the Soviets to proceed slowly with their plan for expanding the Alert Police Force. One such cause is the availability of facilities. The formation of 24 divisions was predicated upon the withdrawal of Soviet occupation forces, making available barracks and training areas for the East German divisions. Unless the Soviet troops withdraw, facilities for even 8 German divisions would require considerable new construction.

In addition, another political event of pertinent importance has arisen-- the beginning of the Western effort to integrate West Germany with the Western Allies and to rearm the West Germans. Since the war potential of West Germany is so much greater than that of East Germany, both in manpower and industrial capacity, the prevention of Western plans for West Germany became a major Soviet objective. The "peace campaign" was started; and so long as it continues, it is possible that the East German Alert Police Force will be kept in the background. Indeed, if the U.S.S.R. could forestall West German rearmament by abolishing the Alert Police, it would undoubtedly be of great advantage to the Soviets to do so.

Finally, there is the consideration that the Soviets are arming and equipping not only East Germany but all the Satellites as well. As soon as the probable original mission of the Alert Police became impossible to achieve, the U.S.S.R. may have deemed it advisable to reallocate priorities and to proceed with the rapid equipment of those Satellites who had reached a more advanced state of training.

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3. Are there indications that the Alert Police will be reorganized and expanded into an efficient ground force by the end of 1952? If this operation is undertaken vigorously, how large a ground force could be created by the end of 1952?

The report of a group of East German Alert Police officers undergoing training in the U.S.S.R., presumably for divisional staff work, is an indication that the Alert Police will be expanded into a ground force by the end of 1952. On the other hand, it has also been reported that a two-year training program was to be drawn up by 1 October 1951 which would not advance the state of training much beyond its present level. In addition, it has been reported that the Headquarters of the Alert Police decided recently to release enlistmen who had completed three years of service.

From the East German point of view, an expansion would seem to be highly desirable. Unless the duration of officer candidate courses is lengthened to two years, or unless a very high percentage of candidates now in school fails to receive commissions, there should be approximately 16,000 officers in the Alert Police Force by the end of 1951, out of a total strength of 52,000. This number of officers could hardly be used in positions normally occupied by non-commissioned officers, as the percentage of non-commissioned officers is also exceedingly high. The alternatives appear to be expansion, or the discharge of many junior officers into a reserve.

The Alert Police Force, thus far, has not developed much of a quartermaster service. This indicates that a large-scale expansion is presently not contemplated; but there is the possibility that East German divisions could be integrated within Soviet corps, and the quartermaster service could be carried out largely by Soviet units.

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In summary, expansion of the Alert Police into an efficient ground force by the end of 1952 is possible. Militarily, expansion would be logical. Economically, it is entirely feasible; and 8-division army would impose no unbearable burdens on East Germany's economy. The political factor appears to be the decisive one. Its most important aspect is West German rearmament.

The maximum expansion considered possible during 1952 would be 24 divisions, with 250,000-300,000 men. Such expansion would require an all-out effort, and would seriously affect the East German economy. An expansion to 8 divisions and a strength of 80,000-100,000 seems much more probable.

4. What has been the effect of the "Peace Campaign" and of the attack upon the rearmament of Western Germany upon the morale of the Alert Police?

No doubt the reactions of those members of the Alert Police who already resent the political indoctrination program of the Soviets are intensified by the Peace Campaign and the attack upon the rearmament of West Germany. Even among the others, there must be some skeptics who wonder why West German rearmament is militaristic, while that of East Germany serves to defend the peace. Soviet emphasis during 1951 on the Leninist concept of "Just and Unjust War" could reflect an attempt on their part to prevent the Peace Campaign from producing a sort of pacifism among members of the Alert Police.

5. How many German PW's remain now in the U.S.S.R.? Is there evidence that these prisoners are organized, or could they be organized, into an effective, reliable German armed force or could they be added to an expanded and reorganized Alert Police?

TASS, the official Soviet news agency, claimed on 4 May 1950 that there were only 13,000 German prisoners of war remaining in the U.S.S.R. This is generally regarded as an understatement. There is no reliable evidence available on the exact number. The West German Social Democratic Party, on 18 October 1951,

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estimated that 100,000 remained. Estimates of the number of German PW's in the U.S.S.R., who have died range from 300,000 to 1.2 million. It is possible that there are no more than 100,000 German PW's still in the U.S.S.R.

A Soviet plan for an East German armed force did exist. It has been carried out in part by the organization of the Alert Police, the original cadre of which was formed in the U.S.S.R. from prisoners of war who were subjected to "Antifa" indoctrination. Those who responded were given the opportunity of returning home---if they joined the "police". Other returnees with critical military skills were pressured into joining after their return to Germany.

There is no evidence that PW's still in the U.S.S.R., who have been prisoners for some nine years, have become pro-Soviet, or could be formed into an effective, reliable German armed force.

B. (no contribution)

C. (no contribution)

D. SOVIET FORCES STATIONED IN EASTERN GERMANY

1. There have been no significant changes during the past year in the size, quality, or capabilities of the Soviet Ground Forces in East Germany.

2. There is no evidence that withdrawal of any ground force units is contemplated. Nor is there any evidence of any probable increase within the near future.

3. The railways of East Germany, despite having lost much of their pre-war capacities, can still satisfy present demands. Restoration to their pre-war status would require replacement of much double-track, and an improvement in the rolling stock and motive power position. Additional equipment alone, without restoration of double-track, would increase greatly the military potential of

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the railways; this increase could be effected in short order by diverting equipment from other Satellite rail systems. There are presently no indications of any significant track replacement program. The most important rail construction during 1951 was the opening to traffic of the Berlin southern by-pass. The line will probably be improved during 1952.

Little highway improvement has been made, but the road network is of high capacity and is in reasonably good condition.

A major new waterway project was begun during 1951 and will possibly be completed in 1952. This new project is the Faretz-Niederneudorf canal which bypasses the Western sectors of Berlin.

The construction of the southern rail link by-passing Berlin and the new waterway project both appear designed to avoid traffic complications with the Western powers, but they do increase Soviet transport capabilities in East Germany.

V. ADDITIONAL INDICATIONS OF PROBABLE SOVIET COURSES OF ACTION

1. Mutual defense agreements would imply to the Western world that Eastern Germany was integrated firmly into the Eastern Bloc. Those non-Communist groups, in West Germany which hoped for German unity and which thus opposed integration with the West, would then in all probability support integration with the West.

A mutual defense agreement also implies that both parties have armed forces which can be used to implement the agreement. The fact that the Alert Police Force is a potential army is not admitted by the German Democratic Republic. Such an admission would have a damaging effect upon the Soviet propaganda campaign against the "remilitarization" of West Germany.

2. The preoccupation of Soviet diplomacy and propaganda, in recent months, with the subject of West German rearmament and integration into the Western defense plans may indicate some shift in Soviet objectives. While the Soviet long-term objective of control of all Germany remains unchanged, the

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Western decision that West Germany should contribute to Western defense presented Moscow with an immediate problem; namely, how to delay, or to prevent, West German contribution to Western defense.

Prevention of West German rearmament now appears to be a primary Soviet short-range objective which has gained priority over the complete integration of East Germany within the Soviet bloc. Since reunification apparently is one method by which the Soviets may hope to prevent West German rearmament, they may hesitate to pursue policies which would do little to engender reunification; closer ties between East Germany and the Soviet bloc would be one such policy.

3. Soviet behavior in regard to the reunification of all Germany could provide an indication as to probable Soviet courses of action elsewhere in the world. While Communist acceptance of Western pre-conditions for all-German elections could be a cover for a general attack by the Soviets on Western Europe, it also could indicate a Soviet willingness to relinquish its hold on Eastern Germany, if guaranteed that a reunified Germany would be disarmed and neutral.

4. It is more probable that the Soviets will continue for some time their present propaganda campaign of alleged intentions and veiled threats, never losing sight, however, of their long-term objective of a Communist controlled Germany. Even should their present campaign fail to prevent West German rearmament, the Soviets would have retained their favored position in East Germany.

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